

Planning Commission Meeting for New Castle City took place on August 22, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.

Members Present: William Simpson, Co-Chair
Joe DiAngelo
Susan Marinelli
Jonathan Justice
Dorsey Fiske
Dr. Jack Norsworthy*

Members Absent: David Bird, Chair
Florence Smith
Vera Worthy

Also Present: Marian Hull, URS, City Planner
Jeff Bergstrom, City Inspector

Mr. Simpson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Roll call was taken.
Dr. Norsworthy joined the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – Ms. Marinelli noted a correction to page 4. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the minutes of the July meeting as corrected.

Update on Planning Studies – Ms. Hull reported that at City Council's August meeting the matter of screening of non-conforming outdoor uses was discussed and Council asked her to draft an ordinance that would regulate these uses. She has prepared a draft that is being reviewed by the City Engineer and City Solicitor. In lieu of discontinuing use, within 3 years screening the use with either a wooden fence, a masonry fence, minimal-height landscaping of evergreens, or a combination of these. It sets up a review policy by the City Administrator who may consult with Planning Commission. It involves a 45-day review period and if no comments are received the process would continue. Two other elements are exceptions to the screening process (access to the site), and there are at least two (2) car dealerships operating today and as long as the space is used for the use of new/used vehicles for sale that there would be an allowance for them. Mr. Bergstrom asked about adding boats to the language and brief discussion followed. (*Further discussion about the type of screening followed.*)

Mr. Simpson said he wants the city administrator to be the single source. Also, he asked if an exception can be made for security purposes. (*Discussion followed.*) Council has scheduled a special meeting on 8/30/11 at 6 p.m. A public hearing will take place their meeting to discuss this issue. Appeals would be heard by the Board of Adjustment.

Ms. Hull has been working with the city engineer on a response to DelDOT about traffic improvements along Route 9. The response will address a response from the city engineer and herself to what DelDOT has proposed and options that have been discussed over the years. She will provide the response to commissioners once it is complete. (*Discussion followed.*)

Proposed Riverfront Concept Plan – A letter (8/15/11) from Ms. Linda Ratchford was provided to Commissioners and reviewed. A purchase order has been executed to finish the project. There is a WILMAPCO Public Advisory Committee meeting on 8/29/11 that Mr. Bird will be attending. Any communications should go through City Administrator Thomas.

Proposed Minor Subdivision of Anthony Gambacorta, 211-015.30-074, 075 & 087 from three parcels into two parcels – Mr. Carmine Casper, civil engineer, presented. The property owner would like to turn three lots into two lots, side by side, semi-detached two units. They have gotten approval from HAC for the front yard setback (8 ft.) and side yard setback (3.2 ft.) approval from HAC and also a variance for the rear yard from 25 ft. to 20 ft. from the Board of Adjustment. The lots are of varying sizes and the owners decided to combine the lots into two lots. Mr. DiAngelo inquired about off-street parking and was informed none is required. Mr. Justice asked about the 20 ft. measured to the stoop rather than to the back wall of the house. Mr. Casper said it is unique to New Castle that stoops are considered structures like houses. Most jurisdictions would not require a variance for a stoop. There will be a front stoop but HAC determines the front and side setbacks and have approved both.

Dr. Norsworthy made a motion to recommend to City Council to approve the proposed minor subdivision of Anthony Gambacorta as submitted. Ms. Fiske seconded the motion.

Roll call vote followed.

Mr. DiAngelo – voted in favor to recommend minor subdivision saying he does not see any problem with the development of the property.

Dr. Norsworthy – voted in favor to recommend to City Council citing the same reason.

Ms. Fiske – voted in favor to recommend to City Council citing the same reason.

Ms. Marinelli – voted in favor to recommend to City Council citing the same reason.

Mr. Justice – voted in favor to recommend to City Council citing the same reason.

Mr. Simpson – voted in favor to recommend to City Council saying he believes it will be an improvement to the community.

Budget Status – Mr. Simpson commented that since City Council requested Ms. Hull write an ordinance, the work should be applied to their budget and not the Planning Commission's budget.

Other Business – None.

Commissioner's Comments – None.

Comments from the Public --None.

Next Meeting – The next scheduled meeting is 9/26/11 at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment – **A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Turner

Debbie Turner
Stenographer